

Rapture

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Summary: A hijack/frostcup Bioshock AU: The job was simple. Get in. Get the kid. Get out. Jack didn't count on ending up under the Atlantic, in some horrendous dystopia, learning things he wished he never knew. He especially didn't count on forming a relationship with his cargo, an odd boy nicknamed Hiccup.

Rapture

Author's Note: what started off as a one-shot turned into a full fucking chapter. Oh well. This is based off the first Bioshock and Bioshock: Infinite, which are some of my favorite games, and I really recommend them if you haven't played. Unless you're not into blood, then stay away. There may be some spoilers, just warning now. For those reading my other fanfic, don't worry, I'm still writing it. Actually, I already have the new chapter written, I'm just not sure if I want to post it. So, if anyone could give me some ideas or suggestions for it, I would be truly grateful because I'd like to get that posted as well.

Disclaimer: I don't own these characters or the game franchise. Because if I did, I'd have a helluva great time.

Warning: it's going to get pretty bloody and twisted, so if you're not into that, don't keep reading.

* * *

><p>Welcome to Atlantis<p>

Tales of ancient cities and daring warriors were present everyday. Stories of heroic acts and slaying monsters struck the hearts of everyone who heard them. Youth was such a precious gift, and it was nourished by the epics of yore, allowing the imagination to thrive past the cosmos, and escape the dark. The void of adulthood was usually able to destroy this gift of hope and wonder, rendering

memory the only way to relive these tales and pass them on. Yet, one story managed to surpass these circumstances and become the center of dream and reality.

For it was legend.

It began at the dawn of time, when civilization grew, expanded, and conquered. The Ancient Greeks were the first to discover it, this piece of godlike wonder settled on the sea. It was as real as the sky or the earth, because they saw it with their own eyes. Oh, what beauties grew upon the stretch of land, blooming forth and rising above all others. This isle of immense wealth and great prosperity brought forth an epoch of gold. But it would never last. Such greed and lust for blood grew in the minds of the island's inhabitants. They got all that they wanted, yet still yearned for more. Their own desires became the chains that bound them to their fate, as the Gods that watched from high above the mountain tops sealed them away in a watery grave, for all eternity. Life was such a trivial matter, and humans were just pieces in the Norns game of chess. They called forth this paradise, and destroyed it. Was it deserved? Was it right to eliminate Eden from the place of man? No one could really say, when one day the world was graced with the immense beauty of the stars, and the next, it was drowned beneath the waves of the deep ocean.

Some still believed in it, for they had witnessed it themselves and passed on the story. Alas, time had a funny way of changing things to suit itself, even daring to challenge truth. The story of the island sunken beneath the water became legend, a story for children. Elders who believed it were deemed insane or senile, and youths were called wild dreamers. And the epic of this city was smothered, out like a candle in the wind...

* * *

><p>"Alright, pal. Don't 'cha think you've had enough?"<p>

A young man with spiky, brown hair sat half drunk on a bar stool, resting his head next to a glass of cheap scotch while the bartender spoke to him. He couldn't even pay attention as the alcohol blurred his vision and turned him deaf to the rest of the world. He tried and failed to focus his brown eyes on anything when the man spoke again, "Hey! You okay, fella?"

From across the bar, a thick meathead of a man chuckled amongst two others of the same build, "Looks like the little guy can't handle his booze."

"Pfft, little?!" The young man stood up, staggering as he stepped forward to squint at the guy, "I-I'll have you know that I'm...wait..." He craned his head upward in thought, blinking as he counted on his fingers, "I forgot, but let me tell you, bub, I sure as hell ain't little!"

The man slammed his drink down on the table, rising like a beast from the depths of Hell. He advanced towards the youth, and towered over him as if he were a massive tidal wave over an itty bitty village. He growled, "Well, you sure look little to me." The two males at his table concurred with the statement by laughing and repeating the remark.

The lad smirked, "That's not what your wife said last night."

All patrons in the bar looked in their direction, some gawking as they let out a simultaneous '_oooh_', others snickering over the ballsiness the kid had. They could all agree that there was gonna be a good show.

"What 'chu say, kid?"

"Heh. Y-you heard me."

The brute grabbed him by the collar, raising a giant fist ready to pummel in his pretty face. The youth didn't even flinch, in fact, he goaded him to throw the first blow. Meanwhile, the bartender tried to diffuse the tension by raising his voice over the others who encouraged them, "_Oi!_ Take it outside, gents!" But it was too late, the customers began chanting for the battle to begin from their seats, watching the duo as if it were a free boxing match.

The fist was about to smash in his face, harsh enough to break his nose, when an unfamiliar voice was heard above the quarrel, like the distinct call of an owl out of chattering canaries. Everyone stopped talking and searched for the source, when all eyes (including the young man and his assailant) settled upon a figure, clad in a grey trench coat and matching fedora. He stood near the entrance and spoke clearly in a strong Australian accent, "Gentlemen, we don't want to turn this into a row, now do we?"

The young man searched the stranger for a face, but the hat's shadow covered the top half of his countenance, leaving a pair of thin lips exposed. He stated, "Put the kid down, and no one gets hurt."

"_No one gets hurt!?!_ Hey, fellas, get a load of this guy!" The brute gestured to his buddies behind him, laughing incredulously at the statement. Apparently it was contagious, since all the patrons broke into bouts of giggles, the threat as frightening as a feisty kitten. The man turned back to grin at the figure, but as he did, he received a sharp blow to the face from a flying object. The drunk lad sobered up a bit as he was dropped by the other male, and fell to the ground flat on his behind as the weapon whizzed by his head. He then looked to the figure, to see him catching a thin piece of curved wood in his hand, decorated in tribal symbols.

One of the brute's comrades stood and charged at the stranger, only to be kicked in the gut and pushed back. The thick meathead tumbled backwards, knocking over another customer who tried to punch him back but failed to do so, and instead ended up smacking the man next to him. That fellow tried to return the blow, but ended up hitting someone else. At that moment, a simple bar turned into a full-blown battle royale as random punches began circulating around the room like the plague. It was kind of like a science experiment: set one tree on fire, and the whole damn forest would be engulfed in flames. Bodies thudded against tables and booths, glass crashed to the ground or cracked against skulls, skin swelled and bruised, it was a _bloody free-for-all!_ The young man scooted on his hands and knees to avoid the others, being egged on by the figure. Once he was close enough, the stranger grabbed his wrist and yanked him up and out of the building.

A considerable distance was established, as the man dragged the both of them into an alleyway and out of sight. The fedora was taken off while he tried to catch his breath, revealing a head of bluish-grey hair and unrealistic green eyes, a color only seen on the silver screen.

The youth pointed a finger at him, swallowing the dry air in his mouth, "O-okay, look here pal, I don't know what this is but-

"Your name's Jackson, correct? Jackson Overland?" Peridot eyes adverted to him, his face neutral and dark.

"How did you-

"_Is it?_"

"Uh, yeah? I prefer Jack, if you don't mind. And who might you be?"

"That's not important. Right now, we just need to get to the top of Burgess Tower."

"I-w-what? _We?_ Uh-uh, I don't think so. If you think I'm going anywhere with you-

The man took a firm hold of his wrist, dragging him out of the alley and up the street, putting the hat back on his head. Despite Jack's many protests and attempts to break away, the other male kept an unnatural grip on him as they sped past concerned onlookers. His dirty, leather boots skidded against the pavement, leaving black marks behind him in a long trail. But the man wouldn't let up, he continued to pull him until Burgess Tower was just ahead. Jack had passed the building many times on his way to work, it was a familiar landmark for businessmen to go and make thousands in the corporate empire. Why on earth would he have any business here?

The figure loosened his grip, switching the pace so it looked like they were walking side by side as they slipped by suited men in black holding briefcases. That was the first time the youth had ever seen the interior of the place. The lobby was suited out in marble, posh lighting fixtures adorned the ceiling, even the receptionists answering phone calls were beautiful. He eyeballed one in particular, with curly blonde hair and luscious red lips. He probably would've stopped to chat her up if it wasn't for the other male pushing him in to an elevator.

"_Hey!_" He yelled as the doors closed and the guy pressed a button for the 11th floor. The elevator shuddered and shook as it ascended upwards, dinging at each stop. "What's your deal?"

The other male held his hands behind his back nonchalantly, tapping his foot to the scratchy tune playing. Jack turned towards him and looked him straight in the eye, "Hello? I'm _talking_ to ya?"

"...Didn't you used to work as a private investigator?"

The question took him back a bit. The man just kept a calm expression adhered to his face, clearing his throat and checking the time on his pocket watch. He stammered, "How did you know that?"

"I know almost everything about you. You were born here in Burgess around 1937, raised by your mother alongside your sister, Mary. Your father, unfortunately, died when you were 14, due to an automobile accident. When it comes to your education, you didn't do fairly well, yet you somehow managed to get a job with the police force when you turned 18. You later became a private investigator around the age of 20, sticking to that line of work, until about 9 months ago, when you suddenly quit and turned to work in construction. Your favorite color is blue, you prefer cold weather, and you have an immense fear of being alone."

Jack couldn't even breath as all that information hit him at once. How in the world could this stranger know so much about him? It was like he was an open book, free for anyone to read. The words got stuck in his mouth like a fat glob of peanut butter, leaving him gaping at the other. The 11th floor was finally reached, allowing the duo to see the work space when the doors cranked open. Floral wallpaper stretched out on the walls, dancing with white ferns and chrysanthemums. Carpet ran up and down the space in a velvety salmon, expanding into each cubicle. Before his eyes could take in all the flashy scenery and expensive paintings, Jack was shoved forward and out of the elevator. The man then took a hold of his sleeve, and advanced straight forward, towards a door to an executive office. When he was close enough, he could clearly see the gold plaque on the entrance, with the name "_S. Haddock_." The grey-haired man knocked three times before the door opened and they were ushered inside.

A large window shined bright light and gave a fantastic view of the city's buildings against a cloudless, blue sky. The walls were surrounded by mammoth, cherry bookshelves covered in nautical memorabilia and thick, bland books. In front of him was a dark desk adorned with stacks of disheveled papers and a photograph he couldn't see, and behind it, was the most peculiar man he had ever lain eyes on. He wore a white, button up shirt completed with a green tie and brown suspenders. That wasn't weird, what was weird would be the bushy beard and mustache on his face. It was a blanket of thick, curly auburn hair long enough to span out and barely touch his chest; the hair on his head wasn't as crazy, since it was slicked back. In comparison, the gentleman was a giant to Jack, a thick wall of muscle and fat. Opposite him, next to the window, was a man just as large. He wore long locks of silvery-white, his hairline slowly receding, with a silky straight mustache and beard to match. In all honesty, he looked like Santa Claus, just more in shape. He wore black slacks and a dark grey jacket over a white shirt, with an odd pin on his chest.

"Ah! There he is!" The Claus doppelg nger spoke in a cheery Russian accent, turning to look at the duo with open arms. "We've been expecting you, Jackson!"

The youth was taken aback from the kindness in his voice and the twinkle in his blue eyes. The auburn-haired man added in a thick accent he thought was Scottish, "How are ya fairing today, son?"

Jack stammered, "I-I'm fine, I guess... Can someone please tell me what's going on?"

The Russian quirked his brow at the duo, "Did not Edgar tell you why

you were brought here?"

"Who's Edgar?"

"The man next to you, of course! Edgar A. Bunnymund."

The lad turned to look at the man beside him, the one who dragged him halfway across town. Finally! The bastard had a name! He just didn't expect it to be so... hilarious. He tried to stifle a laugh, but it came out anyway when he repeated, "Bunnymund?! Are you serious?"

The man leered at the boy and flicked him in the ear, "I prefer Aster, if you don't mind, runt."

"Hey! Watch it, bunny boy!"

"Now, now, gentlemen." The Russian moved from his spot and came towards them, placing his hands on his hips, "Let us not fight right now, there is business needing tending to."

Aster huffed and moved in front of the window, abandoning his fedora on a nearby chair. The white-haired man extended a hand to the boy, "I am Nicholas St. North, but most call me North for short."

"Take a seat son." The Scot motioned to a leather chair in front of the desk, as he took the larger chair behind it. "Now you may be wondering why you were brought here, so let me put your mind at ease. I have a job offer for you."

"For me?" Jack intoned, "You know, you could've just called?"

"Yes, but Aster here insisted on retrieving you himself. He didn't think you'd actually arrive if I just called. So, let's get down to it." He stood from his seat and took a long look out the window in deep thought, "I have an extremely important task for you, one that I couldn't trust to any regular police man. I heard of your work as an investigator, how you helped bring down that old mobster, and how you tracked down those missing Bennett children, so you seemed a perfect fit for the job. Your tactics are a tad unorthodox, but they get things done in a timely manner."

"So, what did you need from me, Mister...?"

"Haddock. Sven Haddock." The businessman turned around to look him with sad, green eyes, "And I need you to retrieve my son."

"A missing kid? You know you could just call-"

"No. This isn't an ordinary case of a missing child." Mr. Haddock moved to a nearby bookshelf, and stared at a black and white photograph, "You see, my son and I aren't from an regular town. It's very secluded and difficult to reach. I left him there in the care of his tutors and a good friend of mine, while I moved here to conduct my business. The arrangement worked swimmingly, but now something's happening back home and he's in grave danger."

"Where is he?"

The man stood still for a few seconds, then slowly turned around to

look at him and murmured, "Under the Atlantic Ocean."

It was like a bullet struck him in the chest, taking any breath left out of Jack's lungs. He tried to get out a flurry of questions, but they mixed together in incoherent rambling, until Mr. Haddock spoke again, "I need you to get into the city, retrieve him, and leave as quickly as possible. The whole damn place has gone to Hell, and he's my only child, I can't loose him. So, I beg of ya, bring me back my son. We will provide you with everything you need: firearms, provisions, first aid kits, etc. And you will be paid quite handsomely, so what do you say?"

"I-I just-this is-I'm not even an investigator anymore! Why don't you ask someone else- wait... How much money we talking about?"

Mr. Haddock moved towards his desk and pulled out a briefcase from underneath, dropping it on the table and popping it open to reveal stacks upon stacks of dollar bills, "\$50,000. All yours, if you can get him."

The wads of cash were practically glowing with divine light, and he swore he could hear angels singing in the distance, yet the money wasn't enough to persuade him. He had to snap himself out of the dollar coma and mumbled back to the other man, "Okay. I'm sorry about your kid, sir, but I told you, I'm not an investigator anymore. I know some good fellas who could help you out, but...I can't, I'm sorry." The youth stood and faced downward as he moved near the door.

"But you're one of the best there is! At least you were. Please?"

Jack hesitated as he held the door handle in his shaky hand, "I told you, I just can't."

He couldn't handle looking at the man's befallen expression, practically grieving for his lost child. Such sadness climbed in to his chest, because he felt as though he brought the boy to his death and dug his grave personally. North stepped forward, patting the young man on the back, "Well, if you change your mind, give us a call, yes?" The Russian handed him a worn out business card, with his signature and blotchy numbers.

Jack took it as the other man gave him the jolliest smile he could muster, and slipped it in his front pocket as he opened the door and left the three odd fellows crestfallen.

"Great. Now what are we going to do?" The Aussie groaned, plopping in to a chair.

North held up a hand to silence him, "Do not worry. He is going to help us."

"How do you know that?"

"I can feel it, in my belly."

Aster dropped his head onto the desk and stated sardonically, "Great, we're lying all our hopes on your damned gut. _What could possibly go wrong?_"

* * *

><p>The glow of twilight spanned over the horizon, quietly slipping into a rich ash and smothering the sun's ember. Jack looked out his window, watching cars roll by and mothers walking their children on the sidewalk from his apartment stories above them. With a bottle of whiskey clamped in his palm, he took swig after swig to try and eliminate the growing sorrow forming in his chest. Yet, he couldn't. He knew what it was like to lose a loved one, hell, he knew what it was like to lose someone he barely knew.<p>

Each death struck such a horrific pain in his heart, a feeling he absolutely abhorred, which was the main reason why he dropped out of the police business in the first place. It was a particular case that was the final straw, involving a little girl who was kidnapped by a madman down in Ohio. He tracked down the child to an abandoned apartment complex, but when he got there, it was too late. The girl was barely breathing, pale as a sheet while the kidnapper had hung himself in the next room. Her skin was freezing and her bright, hazel eyes were sunken in and devoid of any life. Jack had wrapped her in his jacket and carried her outside, cradled in his arms. Despite everything he did, all the things he tried, the girl stopped breathing. And he just remembered running, running down the road with the cooling body in his arms as fast as he could. But it was too late. He knew it was. He stopped in the middle of the street, bawling and holding the limp corpse in his arms, rocking back and forth until other policemen had arrived and took her away. That was really the first time he ever cried before, and the last.

The bottle fell to the ground with a thud, spilling some of its contents on his wooden floor. Did he really want Mr. Haddock to feel that pain? The girl wasn't even his, and yet the image of her face was permanently implanted in his skull, burned into memory. To lose a child was a pain he barely understood, and he didn't even want to imagine the suffering that man would go through.

Jack plucked the bottle up, ignoring the spilled liquid, and took a long drink that burned the back of his throat. Alcohol had the wonderful ability to halt judgement and numb away the pain, even if it was for a limited amount of time. He dropped down in his tattered chair near the front door, patched up with old swatches of torn up cloth, and listened to the song playing upstairs from his neighbor's record player. Some popular tune by Ray Charles, he figured. It paired nicely with the liquor and dank atmosphere.

The room grew darker as the hours passed, ranging from light grey to polkadot black, whilst he spent most of the night in the chair contemplating. Would it be so bad to help the poor guy out? For God's sake, his child was lost underneath the Atlantic! However that was possible. The idea of a kid lost beneath the ocean was unbelievable enough, and the proposition was even crazier, but the look on Mr. Haddock's face spoke of truth far more preposterous. But, he was too fragile to handle another case like this. He didn't want to lose another life. He didn't want to look at another face while the spirit died away, leaving behind a frozen husk. Yet, if he didn't do something, what would happen? Could they get another person to go down there and pick the boy up? And what if they couldn't? The man's son would surely perish, far away from any warmth or care. Not to mention the money.

The thought slapped him across the face, pulling him out of his comatose state. He was low on cash, working a dead-end job, practically living off of nothing. And there were bills stacking up, debts to be paid, tabs to pay off. How could his shitty job cover any of that? \$50,000 would cover everything, and more. Heck, he'd be _set for life!_ He could get a new job, move to a new town, find a pretty young girl and settle down. Maybe have some kids, while he's at it. He could get a wonderful new existence, somewhere far away with plenty of trees and fresh air, and just be happy. No more murder cases to be remembered for. No more living in worn-out apartments. No more booze to make him feel better about his sorry ass. Just stacks of dollar bills and a one-way ticket to living the good life.

Jack hopped off of the chair, which squeaked with rusty springs, and made a mad dash for the telephone near his broken television set. He pulled the switch for the ceiling light, immediately illuminating the trashed home. The business card in his pocket was ripped out of its hiding spot, as he hurriedly dashed in each number, the plastic clicking and creaking with each turn on the dial. The youth shoved the phone to his ear, listening for a voice after each long ring. His fingers shook with anticipation, making the phone rattle in his palm when the rings stopped and a Russian accent yawned, "Oi...You know what time it is?... W-what do you, uh, want?"

"North?"

The man's voice seemed to come back to life as he chimed, "Ah! Mr. Overland! I did not expect you to be calling so late. How may I help you?"

"I-uh... I wanted to take you guys up on your offer."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"Fantastic! This is wonderful news! I am sure you have just made Mr. Haddock the happiest man alive! Meet us tomorrow morning, at 8:00, near Crescent Bay Harbor. You will not be needing anything from home, we will be giving you all that you need. Thank you, Jack. You are a _savior_."

Jack hung up the phone, grinning the brightest smile he could muster, as he moved to his bedroom. The word '_savior_' had a nice ring to it. The clothes on his back were stripped away and tossed on the floor, leaving him in his britches. An old sweater was tossed over his head along with a pair of pajama bottoms pulled over his long legs, as he crawled under the brisk sheets on the mattress and closed his eyes for the night. He had a long day ahead of him tomorrow. Overall, he felt a sort of excitement for this job, but he wondered, just what was he getting himself into?

* * *

><p>"Haha! I told you! I should have made a bet." North boasted as he walked beside Aster, who grumbled and rolled his eyes. They strolled past the wharf, the air growing a thin layer of fog as they went.<p>

"Yeah, yeah, old man. Just keep an eye out for the kid, and keep ya belly to yourself."

The Russian chuckled and slapped the Aussie on the back, knocking him forward slightly. Aster turned around to give him a stern word or two, but was stopped when Mr. Haddock appeared and greeted them both. Now all they needed was the kid, and this damned show could get on the road! Or, under the sea, to be more specific.

The Scot turned his head to and fro, out of breath from excitement, "Have ya seen him? Is he around here somewhere?"

"No, not yet." North shook his head, "But, I am sure he will be here soon. Nothing to worry about."

"Bastard betta' show up. I didn't go through all that trouble for nothing." Aster mumbled, crossing his arms across his chest and glaring at a fisherman who looked at him funny.

In the distance, Jack made his way up to them at the pace of a drugged cat. He staggered a bit, from a combination of exhaustion and the negative effects of booze. He couldn't even dress himself properly this morning, and left the apartment in his work clothes. Ugly boots, dirty pants, and a flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up. Yep, he was ready, alright.

"Hey guys." He drawled, rubbing one eye with the back of his hand.

"Good Lord, you look like hell, lad." Mr. Haddock gave him a concerned once-over, while Aster tried to contain his laughter at the sight.

"I'm, I'm fine. Just need some coffee, or something."

North spoke up loudly, penetrating his eardrums with a cheerful tone, "Yes, of course! But first, we need to get you ready for what's to come ahead. Come along."

All three men started moving towards an old shack nearby, chipping and lackluster. Jack followed from behind, almost tripping over his untied shoelaces twice. He wasn't even aware of what was happening as he went inside of it, after the old man unlocked it with 3 different keys, and into the tight room. Someone turned a light switch on, revealing what was actually inside. Right ahead of him, in the low light, there was a spiral staircase, heading down beneath the shack. The sleep in his eyes began to evaporate as he was unwillingly shoved by the Australian down its steps, followed by the other two males. The light grew dimmer after each step, as he was led into complete black, the only sound being breaths and shoes hitting metal.

Once the floor was reached, Jack was lost in the vast dark, as shoes scuffled around him on the concrete ground. "Where is light? Has to be around here-oh! Here it is!" North's voice had a small echo to it as another light was turned on. A burning bright glow enveloped the room, temporarily blinding all four, until their eyes could adjust to it. The youth gaped in awe from the sight; below the simple, shady shack was an entire laboratory. Albeit, it wasn't gigantic, but it was remarkable nonetheless. Straight ahead was a massive screen,

surrounded by dozens of smaller ones, and a microphone. On the right, there were two cots, a gun rack, and a wall full of unidentifiable buttons and switches. On the left, there stood a bench, and a glass case full of colorful medicines in small bottles. Hard to believe that all of this could fit down here.

"This is our base of operations. We had it built many months ago, to help aid you in your journey." The Russian said matter-of-factly.

Jack could barely get the words out of his mouth, "_Months?_ How long have you been planning this?"

"Quite a long time. Here." The man dug behind the cot and pulled out a stack of folded clothes, alongside a pair of leather boots, "Change into these."

"Any particular reason why?"

"You can not go in to a place like this unprepared! Just like a hunter dresses for his work, so must _you_."

He did as he was told, since there was no point in arguing. The flannel shirt was unbuttoned, and traded for a plain, white one instead, the sleeves rolled up. The dirty pants were gone, and replaced with warm, black slacks suited out with dozens of pockets, including padding underneath. He was given a thick tan vest, with compartments for munitions and other items. The other men kept busy by looking at the monitors, ignoring him as he laced up the boots over his pants. North also gave him leather arm guards, that wrapped around his forearms and would apparently prevent him from getting wounds. Was he going to war, by any chance?

"Look, I don't think all of this is necessary." Jack said, scratching under the right arm guard, his skin starting to stick to it.

"Oh, believe me, son. You're going to need them. I would send ya down there in full body armor, but you need to move fast and be stealthy, so this was the best we could do." Mr. Haddock turned to look at him, his voice somewhat sympathetic.

"Exactly." Aster stood and walked next to him, "See kid, you're not just dealing with a simple rescue mission. This is a _full-blown battle_ and you need to be ready. The point of this gear is to keep ya from getting fulla' bullet holes; you can't complete the mission when you're bleeding from the belly." The idea made him cringe, enough to make Jack stop picking at the leather and stand as stout as a soldier.

"Oh, and another thing..." The Russian's voice trailed off as the man moved to the glass case of medicine, "This should give you an advantage."

Jack tried to see what he was doing, but the man had his back towards him, the sounds of glass clanking being the only things he could visualize. North released an '_aha!_' of triumph and turned to look at the youth, holding a plump bottle full of glowing liquid with a long needle atop of it. The lad swallowed a wad of thick air, watching as he flicked the needle and checked the glass.

"Whoa there, I thought this was a rescue, not a _science experiment_!" He backed away when North began advancing.

"This should help you out greatly, especially with what you are going to be dealing with."

The Aussie blocked him from behind and pointed to the bench, "Stop being such a baby, believe me, this is going to be one of the easy parts. So, sit 'cha bum down on the chair and let's get this damn show on the road!"

Sweet Jesus. If he wasn't sober or awake before, he certainly was now. After being pretty much forced down onto the bench, he gripped the seat's edge in fear as North started to prepare the materials. A metal tray was pulled out of nowhere, filled with cotton swabs and a bottle of alcohol. The old man took one, dipped it in the strong liquid, and wiped the skin below Jack's left wrist. It stung, but he was too nervous to even notice. Then the needle was brought forward at an agonizingly slow pace. He watched the glowing blue liquid inside slide around like syrup, as it barely contacted his skin.

North tried to reassure him, "This may hurt a little."

Very quietly, Aster added, "Or a lot."

The needle was jabbed below his wrist, stabbing a vein as the instrument's contents were squeezed, the liquid now pouring into his bloodstream. Ironically, that wasn't the painful part. Just as quick as it came, the needle was removed, but he couldn't even tell. Jack's eyes burned as if he were staring directly into the sun. His head throbbed in unfathomable pain, something comparable to having a cinderblock shoved in his skull, _literally_. The skin on his wrist started swelling, growing bumpy in random places up his hand. Red patches grew in his eyes, while he screamed in agony. He dropped to his knees off the bench, yelling as the pain in his left palm got worse. His body shook violently, to the point where he was almost vibrating. _Then, he felt it_. It was like someone stabbed his hand with 20 steak knives, going right through the skin. It felt horrifically cold, to where he thought his hand had froze solid. One look at the appendage was all it took to scar him for life. His left hand and wrist were completely iced over, the skin frozen and cracking; shards of solid ice stood out in all directions, dripping blood from where they sprouted. It looked like someone had bashed him with a hammer and left him in the freezer.

Jack dropped to the ground with a thud, the icy hand hitting the floor with a glassy crack. The pain was starting to dull, as he fell in and out of consciousness. He could hear the others talking, trying to make him stand up, but his body refused to. When he opened his eyes, it was as if nothing had happened. The pain was just a memory, and his left hand looked completely normal as he lifted it up to look at it.

"That is unusual." North spoke as the lad picked himself off the floor.

Jack turned to look at them and scream bloody murder, but stopped as he looked at their shocked expressions. "I don't think I've ever seen this happen before. Well... Not to _this_ extent." Aster said under

his breath. Mr. Haddock couldn't even get the words out as he gawked.

The youth panted, "What the hell was that?" He didn't have the energy to bark angrily, or throw something. The Aussie muttered, "Ah, mate... You may want to look in a mirror."

Jack narrowed his eyes at the statement, struggling to fully stand. He stepped forward, limping slightly when the remarks the others made started to make sense. He turned his head to the right, and saw his reflection on the wall's mirror. His head of wispy, brown hair now stood out a ghostly white. The bright brown eyes he once bore were now drained of their natural color, replaced with a crystalline blue. His flesh became freakishly pale, almost glowing. He swore his heart skipped a few beats.

"I think you should've lowered the dosage, mate." Aster turned to North, "You gave him too much."

"Hmm. I could've sworn I gave right amount..."

"Too much of what?!" Jack whipped his head in their direction, leering like a feral dog, "What in _God's name_ did you do to me?!"

Mr. Haddock, his initial shock now worn away, was able to respond, "What these two gave ya would be called a _plasmid_."

"A what?"

"A _plasmid_, son. It will aid you greatly on your job. Where we come from, everyone uses them, whether it be for strolling about or chores around the house. That particular one would be known as _winter blast_."

North stepped forward, "It is special serum that introduces modified stem cells into the body, allowing for genetic modification and mutation, giving you what some might call '_super power_'. When introduced to body, plasmid has the tendency to effect the body's pigments. So, sometimes it will change eye color, hair color, or skin color depending on dosage. In your case however, I suppose we gave you just a tad too much."

"Gee, I didn't notice." Jack quipped sarcastically, "Maybe it was the _white hair_ that tipped me off!"

"Don't get ya britches in a bunch, kid. It happened to all of us." Aster pointed to his green eyes.

"Hey! At least your head doesn't look like a blanket of snow! I can't believe-hold on... Did you say _super powers_?"

"I thought you would like that part." North chuckled, "Yes. Using different plasmids will grant you different abilities. Electricity, telekinesis, fire from the tips of your fingers, just to name a few. Unfortunately, that was the only plasmid we could salvage, the rest are left in the city. But I must warn you..." Jack flexed his fingers and stared in the man's blue eyes as he continued, "Using too many plasmids can change you in bad ways."

Mr. Haddock stepped forward and added, "What he means, lad, is that introducing these new cells into the body in extremely large amounts can literally effect your mentality and physical appearance. I've seen friends grow tumors the size of bowling balls on their backs, as well as mothers smothering their children in the crib. So, if you happen to find more, use them sparingly."

The Aussie picked up a pack on a nearby hook and shoved it in the youth's arms, "Here's some supplies. It's got extra ammunition, food and drinking water, a blanket, a few first aid kits, and everything else to at least start you off." The man then pulled a shotgun off of the gun rack, a pistol as well, and dropped them atop of the pack, "These too."

Jack stuck his tongue out at Aster, as he put the pistol in his pocket, strapped the pack over his shoulder, and held the shotgun. Now he was ready. For what? He didn't have a clue.

* * *

><p>All four men stood outside the shack, the wind starting to pick up in ferocity. It bit at Jack's face and whipped his short, white hair back and forth. He was honestly starting to question his judgment, but there was no turning back now. He just wondered how he was going to explain his abrupt change in appearance to his peers.<p>

"How long does it take to bring the damn thing up?" Aster yelled at North, who was messing with some sort of control by the shore, mumbling incoherent words in Russian as he tried to figure the device out. He barked something back in his native tongue, causing the Aussie to groan and question the other's mental capabilities.

Jack stood beside Mr. Haddock by the water, watching the shaky waves of blue jump up and down. The older gentleman sighed, his melancholy gaze searching the waters for anything to focus on. Out of nowhere, he spoke up, "I would like to thank ya, Jack. You're saving my son, and I don't think I'll ever be able to repay you."

"Just doing my job. Well, my _old job_, I suppose."

Across from them, Aster growled at North and snatched the control from his hand, pressing its buttons and switching the dials. The Russian began following him around as they went in circles, yelling about he could do it himself. Jack pulled on his collar and observed his left palm, asking, "So, how am I supposed to use this thing?"

"The plasmid? First off, don't go off using it willy-nilly. You're not going to like the end result if ya do. To use the power, you have to focus on it. Just imagine your hand's a gun, firing off bullets." The lad looked down at the hand, wiggling his fingers lazily. He knew how to fire a gun, just how was he supposed to fire this plasmid?

"Let go ya _yeti!_" Aster argued with North as he tried reaching for the control, which was held high above his head by the other.

The Russian smirked, "Too late, I already have it."

By the dock, a large bathysphere bursted out the water and bobbed in the waves. Jack followed behind the other men as they advanced near it, wide-eyed and gaping like a fish.

"Okay, looks like we're set." The Australian coughed from the steam rising off the mechanism, wafting away the lingering smoke. He used both hands to open the the entrance, revealing the inside with red, leather seating and a lever in the middle. North came up behind him and tossed in a duffel bag, giving the thing a once-over before nodding his approval. The duo moved out of the way and watched the youth from a safe distance, leaving Jack and Mr. Haddock behind on the wooden walkway.

The Scot reached deep into his pocket and pulled out a folded photograph. He took a lingering look at it before handing it to the boy, "This is my son, Hamish. When you find him, be cautious. He needs medication, you can find it in his room."

Jack took the black and white picture, and looked at the face beneath crinkled edges. It was a young man, he'd estimate around 15 to 16 years of age, with relatively shaggy hair and wide eyes. When he heard '_child_', he thought the other man meant an actual kid, like a 7 year old. But a job's a job, he supposed, no matter who he's dealing with.

"What happens if he doesn't get it?"

"It is of the utmost importance you give it to him. Let's just say, _bad things_ will happen if he doesn't."

The ominous message lingered in the air whilst the older gentlemen gestured for Jack to go ahead and climb aboard. What did '_bad things_' mean specifically? Did this Hamish kid have asthma? The question was thought over as he carefully stepped inside the sphere, examining the bronze-gold color of its interior. Once all the way in, the door slammed shut and locked, trapping him inside. Old instinct took over, forcing him to panic and search for a way out. It was a little too late for that.

He heard the sound of a radio being tuned, a broken voice trying to communicate in staticky sentences. To his left, Jack saw a small radio on the wall, the source of the broken syllables. He plucked it out of its case and tuned it until a familiar Australian accent blurted out, "Damn thing ain't working again! Hey! Kid! Can you hear me?"

"Y-yeah? What's going on?"

"No need to panic, you'll be safe in the submersible. Just keep that radio with you at all times, and we'll be able to help ya. Now see that lever behind you? I need you to pull it."

Jack turned around to the handle in the middle of the space, which gleamed beneath the light like some divine sign from the gods that would lead him to his destiny. Just exactly what would happen if he pulled it? There was no time left to question, so he forced himself to grab the metal shaft and give it a good yank. The innermost gears could be heard winding and cranking, picking up speed. The view from the window changed, going from the sight of Mr. Haddock waving goodbye to cold liquid flooding the glass. The metallic sphere

completely submerged under the water, the dark depth of the ocean being all he could see.

Another voice spoke over the radio, belonging to the old man, "Alright. Trip might take while, so sit tight. In mean time, you should load your guns and check over supplies. You can only carry one pack if you want to move fast, so empty bag on floor into yours." Jack plopped down on the springy seat, and reached for the bag, stopping when the voice continued, "And I would like to warn you. We are not the only ones using these radio waves, they can be intercepted by others if we are not careful. So, we will be using code names for safety reasons. From this point on, you will be called '_Frost_.' The boy shall be called '_Hiccup_'."

"_Hiccup_? Are you serious?"

"Yes. By using unrecognizable names, others will have a hard time tracking you. Especially if they make it out of city, then they can not find you."

The youth dropped the radio to his side and breathed, "What did I just get myself into? I need to stop drinking..." The air felt tighter the further the submersible moved, causing his breaths to become shorter. There were so many questions to be asked, so many answers to find out, yet he couldn't seem to grasp at them. He was asked to retrieve a man's son, bring him back, get paid. Nothing more. But, life didn't seem to work that way. He was thrust into a world he could not even begin to comprehend. He allowed himself to be genetically altered. He allowed them to bleach his hair and scar his soul. Everything began weighing the lad down, making the dull ache of remembrance crush him under doubt and fear. If he had known what was going to happen, he would've turned back and ran in the opposite direction until his legs broke. Jack now had a fistful of ice, a head of white hair, and a new identity to match. The end result better be worth it, or else he was going to have a "_long chat_" with the guys who hired him. One involving a baseball bat. He turned the radio off, and closed his eyes, allowing himself to doze off for what felt like hours while the waves rocked him like his mother used to.

* * *

><p>The sphere hit a chunk of coral, shaking him awake. Jack's neck and spine ached from sitting up for too long, the bones popping with audible cracks as he tried to stretch. Azure light poured in from the window, shimmering like iridescent bits of polished sapphire and pieces of silver embroidered with extravagant insignias. It was as if a pirate's treasure chest was emptied, its contents tossed in the sea to float around in ethereal beauty for eternity. He peeked out the window to find the most breathtaking sight he could ever imagine. Below the cold waves of the Atlantic, sat an
empire.

Buildings upon buildings jutted from the sea floor, stretching up to try and scratch the surface and bite at the sky. But they wouldn't. Each towering monolith was planted deep in the sand, permanently drowned in the water. It was like someone took a corner of New York City and buried it here to be found and explored. The bathysphere swam around the skyscrapers, passing dark windows of apartment buildings and burning bright neon signs attached to them. How could anything be so beautiful? Below him, he could see a whale the size of

a bus sluggishly swim, and hum out a long, low note. A flash of pink sped right past the window, stopping to reveal it was a giant squid as it spanned out its massive tentacles. Little fish floated nearby, shining like switchblades. He could practically taste the cold water in front of him and hear the songs of mermaids as they made this place their home. Jack was now separated from the land of man above, and drawn in by the sweet, shivering embrace of _rapture_.

The yellow light overhead shifted to a flashing red, an alarm blaring against his eardrums. Close by, the radio blared out the Aussie's staticky voice, "Oh no... No, no, _no!_" The bathysphere was hit from the right, sending it careening towards a nearby building. The blow knocked his body over, smashing him on the wall like a common rag doll. The machine shook and tried to steady itself as it shakily made its way to a port made of metal rings; the force produced a screeching wail as it pulled inward to a hexagonal room with advertisements on each wall. He could feel the force of water pull on him as the submersible floated up into complete darkness.

"Frost! Kid! Are you okay?!" Aster called out. The youth's hands shakily searched for the radio, and his lungs sighed with relief upon finding it. He choked out, "What happened?!"

"Looks like your bathysphere's been hit by something, the damn thing's too damaged to work anymore. And this was the only one we had left for a return trip!... Ugh... S-sorry kid, looks like if you want to get out of here, you'll need to find another one to bring ya up to the surface."

Jack dragged himself up, searching under the broken light for his gear. Whatever was in the duffel bag was dumped and stuffed in his pack; he didn't even look at the items, and anything he deemed worthless was left behind. The lad looked out the window, and tried to see in the dark area but it was pointless since the bathysphere's bulb burned out. From far above, a shattered lighting fixture sparked with streams of electricity, flashing like a blue lightning bug. Whenever it came on, the partially illuminated room took different shapes. He could identify a carpeted walkway in front of him, now tearing at the edges. Dusty piles of suitcases were strewn around the ground far ahead, either spilling out clothes or toiletries. When the light flashed again, he swore he saw a figure standing by them, riffling through the items. It sparked once more, and he knew someone was there, since they were standing in the middle of the walkway staring directly at him.

He froze. The blue eyes in his head searched frantically for this figure when the lights switched off again. He could hear them growl and spit, dragging something from behind, the sound of metal clanking across the floor being the only indicator that they were there. Blue light flickered in the ceiling, revealing the figure directly in front of the window, peering right at him. He jumped back, clutching his chest when they tilted their head to the side like a dog. It was such a simple motion, but it fueled the dread forming in his body. The person hissed in a feminine voice, "Is it someone new?"

She ran her sharp nails across the window, leaving white streaks down the glass. The woman backed away, her crooked smile visible in the dark, as she chuckled beneath her breath. When he tried to calm his stammering heart, the female charged at the door, smashing her fists against the glass. The most _horrid_ scream was produced from the

back of her throat, ringing in his eardrums. She beat her fists anywhere her hands could reach, trying to break in and get to him, but the bathysphere's metal surface wouldn't let her. Having enough of it, she climbed atop the submersible, and swung at the metal with her weapon.

Jack grabbed for his radio, screaming, "Hey! Who is this?!"

The Russian answered, "What is going on?"

"Someone's trying to get in!"

"Alright. Get your gun ready; when door opens, you're going to have to make a run for it."

"Wait, door? Dear _God_, don't open the-"

The metal released its pressure, allowing the door to crack and open wide. His supplies were grabbed hastily as he made his shaky legs sprint out of the sphere and in to the dark expanse. He could barely breath in the salty air as he looked back to see his assailant missing. She was gone. Around here somewhere. _Waiting for him_.

Any breaths the lad took were dry and shallow, his lungs refusing to take a proper gasp of oxygen. In the low, flashing light, he could hear the sound of feet scuffling and luggage being knocked over. Behind him, a trash bin toppled over, scattering random debris in all directions along with a tin can that rolled by his foot. Jack summoned all of his will to keep calm and, at the very least, seem brave. She let out a ghostly cackle which bounced across the walls, ricocheting on all surfaces that engulfed him. He pulled out his pistol and held it close to his chest, cocking it while trying to keep his shivering finger steady on the trigger. The youth backed away, taking cautious steps up a wide staircase to the upper portion of the room. The female whispered from the dark, "I'm going to _wrap_ you in a sheet..."

Her voice betrayed her actions. It was so menacingly soothing. So quiet and precise. And it only made the fear grow stronger, watering it with small cackles and coos to blossom forth pure horror. She began humming low notes from far above his head, singing to cover her demonic actions from the gods. Maybe she thought the song would hide her choices from those who watched far above, branding her a false angel. Her lovely, cold voice was closer now as he moved down the area and over broken rubble, towards a wall with the only working light in the space. Someone was looking out for him, since the wall had a gaping hole big enough for him to crawl through and get away from here under the angelic lightbulb. Jack made a dash for it, leaping over broken chunks of cement to the only exit and to freedom.

_"AAAAHHHH!" _

That scream drove all hope he had down the drain. He tried to speed up when something dropped down on him from above, pinning him to the dusty floor. Flipping over, he was face to face with the predator, or face to masquerade mask to be more precise. All he could see was a glittery rabbit mask covering the upper portion of her face as she wrapped her fingers around his neck and squeezed. The gun was dropped far from his grasp and the shotgun was slid out of the way as well.

Her fingers crushed the skin under bruising pressure; her nails dug into the pale flesh to the point where it cut the skin, causing droplets of blood to seep onto her fingertips. Jack took a firm hold of her shoulders, pushing back as hard as he could, and jabbed his knee in her stomach.

Her body toppled over upon impact, the sound of the blow giving an audible thunk in her gut. He dragged his body to the side, reaching for the pistol, and once he had it he took it firmly in his hand, pointing it directly at her. She rolled onto her stomach and began crawling towards him, ignoring the pain. The eyes beneath her mask spoke of her only objective: kill. He shut his eyelids closed and pulled the trigger. The pressure stung his ears as the sound bounced in all directions, while her body hit the ground with a thud.

It took all the willpower he possessed to actually look at her, a bullet now gracing the spot between her eyes, leaving a smoking hole in the mask. Blood started to ooze out, pouring down her face and into her open mouth, staining her lips red. He took no time retrieving his dropped items and crawling through the hole in the wall, free from her blank stare.

He pulled himself in a hallway with paintings on the walls that seemed to be melting. But far ahead, ample amber light glowed and beckoned him to salvation. His legs felt like jelly, but he didn't care, he just kept running forward until he reached it. Warm light flooded his gaze from broken chandeliers on the ceiling as he entered a new room. Planters with wilting flowers encircled the space, some cracked or spilling dirt on the damp tiled floor. This place was far from beautiful. It was some sort of dystopia, as if a battle raged on here when it was still in use. Half empty bottles of beer or wine were strewn about, next to open packs of cigarettes. In puddles of water there were small items like shoes or dolls. Directly in front of him, there were two waterlogged staircases curving near the walls, and in between them was a poster for last year's New Year's Eve party. On the banister above him, there was a grand sign in black letters tied to it that was tearing at the edges. Jack read the words out loud in the dank room.

"Welcome to Atlantis."

* * *

><p>Some of the lines are from the original games, so they may seem a bit odd. The part where the plasmid causes Jack's pigments to change is just something I added. In the actual game, they do not do that. On another note, I'm sorry if there are any mistakes or parts that repeat because my computer glitched and posted the story twice.<p>

And seriously, if anyone could give me an idea or a point to continue off on for the other fic, I would be beyond happy, no joke.

End
file.